



NEWS RELEASE

USDA • FOREST SERVICE • Mark Twain National Forest
401 Fairgrounds Rd. Rolla, Missouri 65401 (573) 364-4621 <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/marktwain>.

Release: MT- 299	Contact: Becky Bryan	Voice: (573) 364-4621
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FOREST SERVICE PROPOSES HABITAT PROTECTION FOR ENDANGERED BAT

ROLLA, MO – Mark Twain National Forest is proposing to amend its Land and Resource Management Plan to provide protection and management for endangered Indiana Bats and their summer habitat.

A maternity colony of Indiana bats was recently discovered in an area near Greenville, Missouri in Wayne County. The Forest Service proposes to designate an area to protect the maternity colony. Female Indiana bats roost under the loose bark of trees where they bear and raise their young. Under the proposal, the Forest Service would designate an area of protection and management around roosting trees and insure there are sufficient trees available for the bats to roost.

“We are looking first to protect known occupied roosting trees,” Jody Eberly, wildlife biologist for the Mark Twain National Forest said. “We must also provide a full range of habitat for Indiana bats including sustained foraging habitat and roosting trees, which can only be provided by careful, but active management of the area.”

“Several Indiana bats have been captured by researchers in this area in the past two years, but this is the first time any have been successfully tracked back to their roost trees. Mark Twain National Forest and the North Central Research Station of the Forest Service have been surveying for Indiana bats for the past seven years to gain information on the specific summer habitat needs in Missouri, with only one previous capture of an Indiana bat.” Eberly said.

The Forest Service is working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Missouri Department of Conservation to develop a strategy that will serve to create, maintain and/or enhance Indiana bat habitat in this area. The Indiana bat occurs in the Midwest and eastern United States from the western edge of

the Ozark region in Oklahoma, to southern Wisconsin, east to Vermont, and as far south as northern Florida and was listed as endangered throughout its range in 1967

Additional information on this project may be obtained from Becky Bryan, Forest NEPA Coordinator at (573) 364-4621, or on the Mark Twain National Forest website at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/marktwain/projects/project.htm>.

Anyone wanting to comment on the proposal can send their comments to Mark Twain National Forest, 401 Fairgrounds Road, Rolla, MO 65401, Attn: Becky Bryan. To allow the interdisciplinary team time to evaluate and consider comments, comments need to be submitted by July 26, 2004. Comments will also be accepted by fax at: (573) 341-6844 and by e-mail at: mailroom_r9_marktwain@fs.fed.us. Please include "Proposed Action: Brown's Hollow AOI" in the subject line.

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USDA Forest Service's Mark Twain National Forest is the state's largest public land management agency. The 1.5 million acre forest is managed to continue restoring Missouri's ecosystems and to maintain a healthy forest.

District Rangers are: **Ava**—Jenny Farenbaugh (417) 683-4428, **Doniphan**—Jerry Bird, (573) 996-2153, **Poplar Bluff**—Henry Hickerson, (573) 785-1475, **Potosi**—Katie Stuart, (573) 438-5427, **Houston**—John Bisbee, (417) 967-4194, **Salem**—Thomas Haines, (573) 729-6656